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The Role of Religious Tourism in Creating Destination Image: the case of Konya Museum

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The image of a destination comprises perceptions acquired by individuals, oriented to the specifications of a destination. Touristic destinations are, in order to be able to attract more tourists in the competition environment, in charge of developing marketing efforts, making the best of positioning their products and services together with their economic, cultural and social dimensions in the intelligence of tourists. In this direction, the aim of this study is to determine the destination image perceived by tourists who travel with the purpose of religious tourism when they visit to Konya Museum (Mawlanea Jalaladdin Rumi). The data for the study were obtained by surveying visitors to Konya Mawlanea Museum. In the study, the relationships between the demographic data of the visitors and the destination images that they perceived were studied. The findings suggest that most respondents now use social media to seek information about the Museum. Via these channels they are assured of high levels of satisfaction based on their expectations. In addition, respondents receive and expect a spiritual dimension to their satisfaction.

Key Words: religious tourism, image of destination, Rumi, Mawlanea Museum, Konya, Turkey

Introduction

The evaluation and analysis of destination image has been the subject of much attention in academic literature, and has made a significant contribution to a greater understanding of tourist behavior (see Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli and Martin, 2004; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Chi ve Qu, 2008).

There is a considerable range of factors that affect tourist flows to countries or resorts. Such flows are dependent on destination characteristics such as climate, scenery, services, religious and cultural attributes and amenities. More wide-ranging determinants of tourist flows include rates of exchange, competition from competing destinations, promotion, political factors, and the availability and forms of transport both to and within the destination to cite just a few. It is understood that this matrix of elements result in the images of potential destinations held by tourists (Coshall, 2000; Kim and Richardson, 2003; Ibrahim and Gill, 2005). Images reflect the individual's perceptions of the characteristics of destinations, and are important since they permit tourists to generate a set of expectations about a place before that place is actually experienced (Coshall, 2000).

On a global scale, as an element of leisure time, every weekend and holiday, people leave their homes in the city to go, even if for a few hours, to small rural towns

that have religious, historic, cultural or architectural appeal. The same behaviour can be found in relation to the flow of tourists who travel from larger coastal or urban places, either as tourists or excursionists, attracted by the characteristics of this kind of destination. We cannot deny the importance of this type of tourism in countries such as Turkey, Italy, Portugal, Greece, France, or Spain. All of these countries have natural or scenic wealth and an important historic legacy spread throughout their land, not only in their major cities. In the case of Spain, towns such as Besalu and Pals in Girona, Morella in Castellon, Albarracin in Teruel, and Chelva in Valencia are just some examples of this rich heritage. Nevertheless, gathering information about this type of excursion or tourism and finding proposals for better tourism and marketing management is more difficult than it would seem (Vela, 2009).

For millennia people have travelled to sacred sites. Original spirit-seekers visited hallowed places based on a desire to become closer to divinity, seek forgiveness for wrongdoing, worship ancestors and nature gods, or petition deities for blessings. This religiously motivated travel evolved through time to become more formalised and standardised (Olsen and Timothy, 2006; Nyaupane, Timothy and Paudel, 2015).

In this respect, Konya is the heart of Turkey - a city of a million souls, squats slap in the middle of Anatolia's

wild plain, surrounded by open, endless prairie. Uncovering Konya is easy - for here, at the heart of the old city, in his tomb of turquoise tiles, is Jalaladdin Rumi. Rumi is one of the world's most read poets. During his life, and since his death in 1273, pilgrims have come to Konya. Today, Rumi's tomb is Turkey's second most-visited tourist attraction after the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul. Rumi was a mystic, a Sufi saint who loved all religions, and whose own religion was love. His followers would (and still do) lose themselves in trance and dance, sometimes spinning like tops for hours on end (Gould, 2014).

The aim of this study is to determine the destination image perceived by tourists who travel for the purpose of religious tourism when they visit Konya (Mawlana Jalaladdin Rumi). The data of the study were obtained by survey applied by voluntary attendants amongst the visitors of Konya Mawlana Museum.

Literature Review

Destination Image

The importance of the tourist destination's image is universally acknowledged, since it affects the individual's subjective perception and consequent behaviour and destination choice (Gallarza, Gil, & Calderon, 2002). Also, destination image is multidimensional and comprises both symbolic and tangible features (Mackay and Fesenmaier, 2000).

Most recent research studies on tourism marketing (Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli and Martin, 2004; Moutinho, 1987; Vela, 2009) refer to an image as a concept formed through the consumer's rational and emotional interpretation, the two of which are closely intertwined.

Cognitive evaluations refer to the perceptions, beliefs, and knowledge individuals have of an object. In this case, such evaluations have to do with the cognitive or perceptive component of the tourism destination image, an image created on the basis of a set of attributes which would correspond to the resources, attractions, or general tourism offer at the destination (Stabler, 1995; Vale, 2009).

Alhemoud and Armstrong's (1996) classification explains what is meant by tourism offer. These authors classify tourist attractions into four categories:

1) natural attractions (e.g., forests, rivers);

2) historic attractions (ruins, castles, and other ancient architecture that offers a glimpse into the past);

3) cultural attractions (religious attractions, museums, modern architecture, fairs, festivals, handicrafts);

4) artificial attractions (e.g., theme parks).

Baloglu and McCleary's (1999) review of the influences on destination image revealed three major determinants existing in the absence of actual visitation or previous experience: tourism motivations, socio-demographics, and various information sources. In this regard, the latter represent stimulus variables whereas motivations and sociodemographics stand for consumer characteristics in the proposed path model. Each component that was identified, was selected based on a review of literature and a related exploration of other models.

The image concept has generally been considered as an attitudinal construct consisting of an individual's mental representation of knowledge (beliefs), feelings, and global impression about an object or destination (Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997). Researchers in several disciplines and fields agree that the image construct has both perceptual / cognitive and affective evaluations. The perceptual / cognitive evaluations refer to the beliefs or knowledge about a destination's attributes whereas affective evaluation refers to feelings toward, or attachment to it. A common agreement is that this depends on a cognitive evaluation of objects and the affective responses are formed as a function of these cognitive responses. An overall image of a place is formed as a result of both perceptual / cognitive and affective evaluations of that place (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999).

The majority of destination image studies have used either structured (scale format) or unstructured (open-ended, repertory grid, etc.) measurement techniques. Baloglu and Mangaloglu's (2001) studies adopting a structured measurement technique, employing a semantic differential and / or Likert scale for measuring cognitive and affective components of destination image (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; Vale, 2009; Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997).

Religious Tourism

Religion is a fundamental element of culture and is linked with various elements of people's lives (Poria, Butler and Airey, 2003; Nyaupane, Timothy and Paudel, 2015). For instance, religion influences dress, food and drink, social and political views, social

attitudes, and travel motivations and behaviours (Nyaupane, Timothy and Paudel, 2015). Rinschede (1992) explained that travel behaviour, including travel patterns, transportation choices, seasonal demand, and socialization processes are all affected by beliefs, especially in the context of religious tourism.

Religious site visitors tend to travel with family members or organized groups, and their trip is highly seasonal, influenced not only by climate and weather, but also by the occurrence of holidays, ceremonies, and work schedules (Nyaupane, Timothy and Paudel, 2015). Defining and classifying terms related to religious tourism allows the promotion of clarity in communication and the means of establishing relationships between phenomena. It is not surprising that such a complex and diverse human activity as pilgrimage has no generally accepted definition. However, the absence of a unanimously accepted consensus complicates not only the delineation between non-pilgrimage and pilgrimage, but also the use of different classification criteria for pilgrimage and other forms of religious tourism (Rot, Mikinac and Bogdan, 2014).

Different from simple religious tourism and sightseeing tours, religious cultural tourism, with religious culture as its carrier, has cultural connotation and can satisfy multi-level needs of tourists (Koroglu and Guzel, 2013). Religious cultural tourism not only provides pilgrimage travel services for religious believers, but also provides service activities for ordinary people to understand religious culture, touch religious culture and recognize religious culture (Nyaupane, Timothy and Poudel, 2015). In recent years, with the rapid rise of religious cultural tourism, a variety of tourism projects have been carried out, including religious cultural monument viewing, religious culture experience, religious holiday for peace and recuperation, and religious festivals, etc. which facilitate religious cultural tourism development, present diversification, and gradually such sites / monuments / destinations, become new hotspots and new trends in tourism (Koroglu and Guzel, 2013; Xintong and Yuhui, 2014).

Meeting the needs of the faithful on pilgrimage and the destination where the shrine is located, has led to the development of special forms of religious tourism. The interweaving of religion and tourism is clearly visible in a deeper insight into the historical context of tourism, especially if religion is viewed as one of the oldest motives of human migration a fundamental need

to travel. Religious tourism focuses on visiting important religious sites. The main motivation for travel is to meet the spiritual, and religious needs of people involved in this kind of tourist travel. But the motivation for travel may be exploring the culture of other nations, or other religions, exploring sacred objects, etc. The most common form of religious tourism is pilgrimage. Some religions include pilgrimages in their practice, as is the case with Buddhism, Catholicism and Orthodox Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Shintoism. In other religions, however, this practice does not exist, although their followers visit places that mark the history of the religious group to which they belong (Rot, Mikinac and Bogdan, 2014).

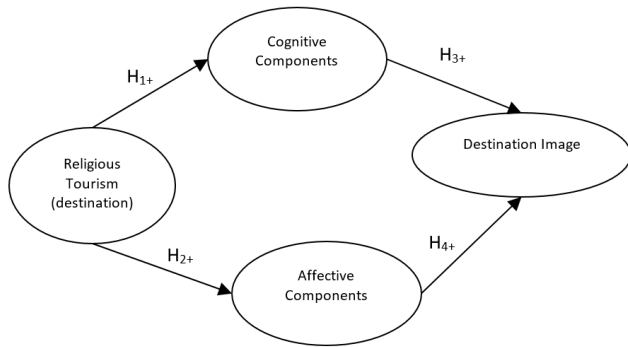
There are also historical examples of linkages between religion and travel such as Islam as a 'vital, vivacious and expanding religion' in which Muhammed's migration (the Hijra) from Mecca to Medina in AD 622 was the genesis of the rapid spread of Islam throughout the world (Raj and Morpeth, 2007).

The subject of this study Konya is Turkey's most religious city and the Whirling Dervish dance is a religious rite in Sufism, a mystical Islamic sect. The top sights are the Dervish Monastery, the Mawlana Museum and Mawlana's tomb. But tourists are welcome at the 17-day Mawlana Commemoration Festival in Konya every December (TTG, 2007).

The Conceptual Model (Research Model)

An exploration of the nature of destination image requires examining the two main streams of research on this topic. More concretely, it is necessary to distinguish between the traditional cognitive approach and the more recent cognitive-affective approach. In earlier studies, only the cognitive component of destination image was considered. Recently, cognitive and affective dimensions are jointly captured in studies on destination image. The cognitive component refers to the beliefs or knowledge a person has of the characteristics or attributes of a tourist destination, while the affective dimension is represented by the individual's feelings toward the tourist destination (Chen and Uysal, 2002; Kim and Richardson, 2003; Martin and del Bosque, 2008).

Some studies have exclusively analysed the cognitive component of destination image through the structured technique or multi-attribute approach. Factors such as 'natural environment', 'cultural heritage', 'tourist infrastructure' or 'atmosphere' underlie the cognitive

Figure 1. Research Model

- H1 Perception about religious destination has a direct and significant effect upon cognitive components.
- H2 Perception about religious destination has a direct and significant effect upon affective components.
- H3 Cognitive components have a direct and significant effect upon destination image.
- H4 Affective components have a direct and significant effect upon destination image.

structure of destination image. Recently, several studies have included cognitive and affective attributes in the measurement of destination image (Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Martin and del Bosque, 2008). The effect of cognitive and affective components upon the constitution of destination image became evident in research carried out separately by Martin and del Bosque (2008) and Vela (2009).

Accordingly, cognitive and affective components together with perception about religious destinations both form and effect the perceived images of a destination. In this current study, belief values are handled in cognitive and affective domains, and determination of their effects upon destination image is examined. Within this context, a conceptual model and the hypotheses of this research are outlined in Figure 1.

Method

The first objective of this research is to identify the travel motivations and knowledge sources of domestic and foreign tourists heading towards religious destinations. The other objective is to determine visitors' perceptions of cognitive and affective components, which are considered to play a role in constituting destination image, and in addition, to examine their effects upon destination image. Originally derived from the work of Baloglu and Mangalolu (2001) and Vela (2009), scale questions were obtained from the work of Koroglu and Guzel

(2013). Visiting the province of Konya and Mawlana Jalaladdin Rumi Museum for religious purposes, domestic and foreign tourists formed the research population. The reason why the research focused on Konya is that it is ranked as the most important religious destination of Turkey and also Mawlana Jalaladdin Rumi Museum located in Konya is the second most visited museum annually (approximately two million five hundred thousand tourists) in Turkey (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2015). For practical reasons, field research was carried out on fixed dates; to reach all domestic and foreign tourists visiting Konya Mawlana Museum is not possible in terms of time and cost. A total of 262 survey forms were completed in interviews with domestic and foreign tourists having visited Konya Mawlana Museum in the months of November and December of 2014. Twenty one survey forms were omitted from the analysis because they did not contain enough valid data. Analyses were performed therefore by using 241 survey forms.

Primary data were obtained using the survey technique acquired from Koroglu and Guzel (2013). The survey form used in the research consists of 3 sections, comprising 33 questions. In the first section, there are statements that aim at determining domestic and foreign tourists' perceptions of cognitive and affective components related to religious destinations and their effects upon destination image. The second section of the survey contains statements for determining Konya-related knowledge sources and travel motivations of domestic and foreign tourists. The last section of the survey consists of questions for determining the socio-demographic properties of the domestic and foreign tourists who participated in the research.

Due to domestic and foreign tourists' participation in the research, the survey form was drawn up in 2 languages, Turkish and English. The first 26 questions in the survey were composed according to the Likert scale. The literature review which was undertaken when preparing for the research was used to identify suitable questions and scales. All questions contained a five point Likert scale. The questions were designed to evaluate the perceptions of Konya as a destination for pilgrims and religious tourists. These effects are created on the basis of tourists' cognitive and affective components for religious destinations. Two different statistical software packages (SPSS 20.0 and AMOS 19.0) were used for analysing the research. During analysis, these two programmes were used together, because they complement each other in terms of their features.

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Variables (n=241)

Demographic Variables	Value	Freq.	%
Gender	Female	111	46.1
	Male	130	53.9
	Total	241	100.0
Age	18-24	25	10.4
	25-31	92	38.2
	32-38	71	29.5
	39-45	45	18.7
	46+	8	3.3
	Total	241	100.0
Educational Level	Primary (Elem.sch.)	2	0.8
	Secondary (High sch.)	56	23.2
	Associate degree	63	26.1
	Bachelor's degree	103	42.7
	post-graduate	17	7.1
	Total	241	100.0
Job	Public prac.	43	17.8
	Officer	60	24.9
	Worker	35	14.5
	Private sect	91	37.8
	Student	1	0.4
	Other	11	4.6
	Total	241	100.0
Nationality	Turkey	101	41.9
	Poland	41	17.0
	Japan	22	9.1
	Russia	26	10.8
	South Korea	24	10.0
	Other	27	11.2
	Total	241	100.0

Findings

Distribution of participants according to socio-demographic properties was primarily evaluated by means of frequency analyses. The demographic properties of the participants are indicated in Table 1. As can be seen in the table, 53.9% of the participants were male, whereas 46.1% were female. It is seen that 38.2% of the participants were aged between 25-31, 29.5% between 32-38, 18.7% were 39-45, 10.4% in the 18-24 bracket and 3.3% were 46 or above.

The proportion of participants with bachelor level university qualifications is 42.7% while that of participants with associate degrees is 26.1%. It was found out that 41.9% of the participants are Turkish, 17.0% are Polish, 10.8% Russian and 10.0% South Korean. On the other hand it is seen that 11.2% of the participants marked their choice as 'other'. This included participants from countries such as China, Iran, Germany and Austria. Since the research was conducted in Turkey, the survey was administered in

Table 2. Tourist Information Sources

Information Sources	Frequency	Percent
Mass Media	1	0.4
Konya Tourist Guidebooks	5	2.1
Internet (Social Networks)	138	57.3
Friends and Relatives	89	36.9
Travel Agencies	8	3.3

Turkish to domestic tourists and in English which is a universal language to the non-Turkish participants.

The distribution of participants' information sources related to Konya is given in Table 2. It was revealed that participants obtained information about Konya and Mawlana mostly via the internet and social networks. Also, among information sources, a significant level of importance is observed in relation to friend and relative circles.

The distribution of tourists' travel motivations related to religious tourism is given in Table 3. Examining the data, the highest values for tourists' travel motivations for religious tourism are 'To provide mental and spiritual relaxation' (37.3%) and 'To get away from stress and earthly burdens' (29.5%). In addition, the statement 'discovering new cultures and different religions' is noted as a motivation for 25.7% of respondents.

The results of explanatory factor analysis can be seen in Table 4. Explanatory factor analysis (EFA) is one of the more commonly used multivariate statistical techniques that turns a large number of interrelated variances into a small number of significant independent-of-each-other factors. Methods of both explanatory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were utilised in this study.

As result of confirmatory factor analysis, the model structure gains acceptance according to the *Model Fit Index* (shown in Table 5). The *Model Fit Index*

Table 3. Travel Motives for Religious Tourism

Motive	Frequency	Percent
To rest and relax	11	4,6
To discover new cultures and different religions	62	25,7
To provide mental and spiritual relaxation	90	37,3
To get away from stress	71	29,5
To feel the spiritual atmosphere	7	2,9

Table 4. Explanatory Factor Analysis Results

Variable Name		1	2	3	4
Religious Tourism	(2) Konya has important religious tourism attractiveness	.742			
	(3) Konya is a religious destination that has religious motifs	.699			
	(8) Konya is among the important religious tourism destinations in the world	.597			
	(1) Konya is a religious destination	.438			
Cognitive Components	(19) A place with neither environmental nor urban pollution		.654		
	(9) The locals are friendly and hospitable		.631		
	(15) The atmosphere is laid back and relaxed		.608		
	(24) A place where good quality local gastronomy can be tasted		.608		
	(25) A place where provides mental and spiritual relaxation		.606		
	(17) Shops blend well into the nature and idiosyncrasy of the place		.564		
	(12) I had the feeling of going back in the past, of getting lost among the stones		.557		
	(13) A place where heritage and historic structures and buildings are open to the public (ease of access)		.547		
	(5) A place with a beautiful urban ensemble		.422		
Affective Components	(14) I felt like I had an authentic experience			.740	
	(10) The atmosphere is different and energizing			.738	
	(18) I had the feeling of getting a second wind, of filling up with energy			.623	
	(22) I did not feel stupid or like I wasted my time, as if I were being ripped off			.610	
	(21) I felt good admiring the architecture of the past and how it stands the test of time			.607	
	(20) I got the feeling of personal and intellectual growth			.603	
	(16) I had the feeling of peace and tranquility			.600	
	(23) I had the feeling of safety and calm			.583	
	(26) I had the feeling of tolerance and respect			.545	
Destination Image	(6) The atmosphere is mystic				.772
	(4) I would like to visit again(Revisiting)				.745
	(7) A place with historic-heritage and religious wealth				.427
	(11) I would recommend to my friends and relatives				.426
Coefficient alpha per component		0.730	0.854	0.897	0.710
Coefficient alpha		0.933			
% of variance explained		55.732%			
KMO		0.951			
Barlett		2973.186 (df. 325; p<0.001)			

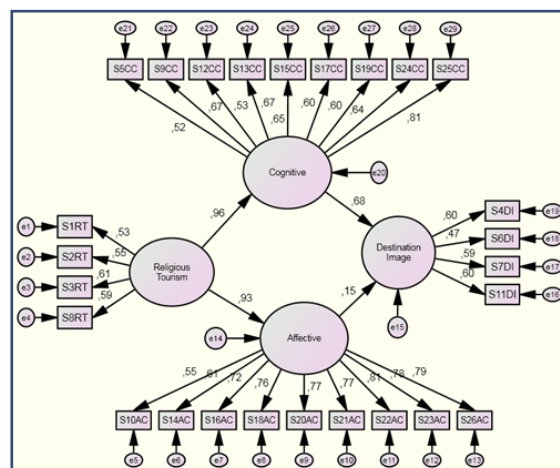
Figure 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Table 5. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

	χ^2	p	χ^2/df	CFI	NFI	GFI	AGFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Model Fit Index	468,050	0,000	1,58	0,94	0,85	0,87	0,84	0,05	0,04

generates a phase, during which a decision of acceptance or refusal for a model is made. In order for a model to posse a perfect fit (suitability) structure, the RMSEA value should be as good as 0.05 or less (Arbuckle, 2007). The RMSEA value of the research model is 0.049, the $\chi^2/df = 1,58$ and also $p < 0.000$. When we look other model fit values, it is seen that acceptable values are provided by the model.

When we look at results acquired in the structural model in consequence of performed analysis; perception about the religious destination has a significant and directly positive effect upon cognitive components ($\gamma = 0,965$; $p < 0,001$). Thus H1 was not

rejected. On the other hand the hypothesis (H2) ‘perception about religious destination has a positive direct ($\gamma = 0,929$; $p < 0,001$) and significant effect upon affective components’ was accepted. The hypothesis (H3) ‘Cognitive components have a direct ($\beta = 0,68$; $p < 0,001$) positive and significant effect upon destination image’ was not rejected. As stated by hypothesis H4, affective components have a positive direct ($\beta = 0,15$) effect upon destination image. However this effect is not significant ($p > 0,05$). Therefore H4 was not accepted. Besides it was found that perception about religious destination and all effect values upon destination image are indirect.

Table 6. Structural Model Results

Independent variables	Dependent variables	Total Effects ^a	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	S.E.	Critical Ratio (t)
Religious Tourism	Cognitive	0,965	0,965	-	0,081	6,809***
Religious Tourism	Affective	0,929	0,929	-	0,095	9,025***
Religious Tourism	Destination Image	0,795	-	0,795		
Affective	Destinasyon Image	0,148	0,148	-	0,124	0,743*
Cognitive	Destinasyon Image	0,682	0,682	-	0,224	3,065***

^a Total Effects=Direct Effects + Indirect Effects, *** $p < 0,001$, * $p > 0,05$

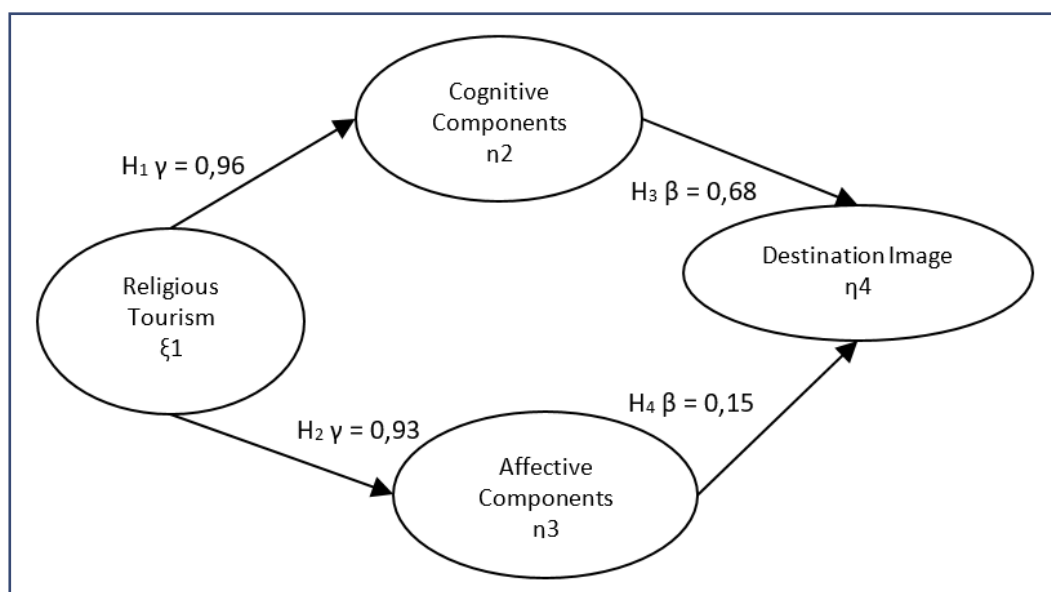
Figure 3. Structural Equation Model

Figure 4 : Mevlana Museum

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ATurkey%2C_Konya_-_Mevlana_Museum_01.jpg

Conclusion and Implications

The importance of the tourist destination's image is universally acknowledged, since it affects the individual's subjective perception and consequent behaviour and destination choice. Previous studies show that destination images effect the quality of trip, tourists future behaviour and purchasing process, their individual perceptions, their destination choices, their satisfaction regarding the destination and recommend intentions (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli and Martin, 2004; Ibrahim and Gill, 2005; Chen and Uysal, 2002; Vela, 2009; Koroglu and Guzel, 2013). Therefore, positively perceived destination images are critically important.

Consumers' perceptions of Konya Museum as the centre of religious tourism were affected by cognitive and affective components. Additionally, it was found in the research that cognitive and affective components effect constitution of destination image, but cognitive

components are more effective for the constitution of destination image.

Consideration of participants' information sources related to Konya is presented in Table 2. It was revealed that participants obtained information about Konya and Mawlana mostly via the internet and social networks (57.3%). Also among information sources, the significance of friend and relative circles is observed (36.9%). Other sources of information are: Travel agencies (3.3%), tourist guidebooks (2.1%) and Mass media (0,4%). It has been determined that the majority of the participants use the internet and social networks for the information sources. For this reasons especially, for the viral marketing and advertisement of the Konya (Mawlana) the usage of the internet and social networks are very important.

Participants' motivation to travel for religious purposes is 'to provide mental and spiritual relaxation' (37.3%) and of 'to get away from stress and earthly

Figure 4 : Interior of Mevlana Museum

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rumi_museum.jpg

burdens' (29.5%). However, 'to discover new cultures and different religions' (25.7%); 'to rest and relax' (4.6%) and 'to feel the spiritual atmosphere of different religions' (2.9%) are all important travel motivations for participants. For these reasons, it should be emphasized that Konya is an ideal destination that should be visited for exploring new cultures and different religions, provide mental and spiritual relaxation, get away from stress and find comfortable tourism services.

Cognitive components have important effects on the formation of the destination image. The cognitive and the affective components both have effects on the holistic destination image. These findings support the research of Baloglu and Brinberg (1997), Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2001), Martin and del Bosque (2008), Vela (2009), Koroglu and Guzel (2013).

Destination managers who would like Konya to be a pioneer with its spiritual appeal and to develop the image of religious tourism destination, should analyse the destination formation process carefully. Destination marketers should pay more attention to the motivations

to visit Konya. The results reveal that some motives have more impact on the image of the destination than others.

Due to the impact of tourist information sources on sensory evaluations, destination managers in Konya should consider foregrounding moral values in their promotional activities in multiple information sources. Social media channels, with this direction, should be used collaboratively with visual content in an active way. For example, current photos and videos of destinations should be included on social networking platforms such as Facebook. In this way electronic media should be used to leverage the word-of-mouth communication. This may result in the creation of an impressive destination experience; blending it with spiritual values will emphasise one of the key elements that attract the tourists who have never visited the destination.

Destination managers should create data banks that could be instantly accessible in multiple languages both for domestic and foreign Tourists. In destinations which are known as religious centres and have spiritual values like Konya, this would assist in eliminating the

cognitive and affective deficiencies of tourists, thus, it could contribute to the image of the destination.

In this research, a limited sample was utilised due to time and cost limitations. Therefore, this exercise must be considered as a preliminary study. In the future, expansion of this kind of work should be considered, to achieve a bigger sample, reaching more tourists and testing of alternative research models.

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